Business Plan

2017–2018

Office of Immigration

NOVA SCOTIA

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Budget 2017–2018: Business Plans

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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the 2017-18 Business Plan for the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI). 2016 was a record year for immigration in our province and 2017 is shaping up to be another exciting year. In 2016, 5,483 people chose to make Nova Scotia their home – more immigrants in one year than any time since the Second World War. While more people are coming to our province they are also staying. In 2014 (most recent data available), 73% of people who landed between 2009 and 2013 were still living here. In the early 2000s, less than half were staying.

A highlight of the past year was Nova Scotia's response to the Syrian refugee crisis. In just one year, Nova Scotia welcomed over 1,500 refugees. This is a significant increase compared with previous years, where our province typically resettled about 200 refugees. I am incredibly proud of how Nova Scotians across our province responded to this crisis – either by privately sponsoring refugee families or welcoming government assisted families to their communities. In 2017-18, we will continue to work with our partners in the settlement sector and in our communities to help new Nova Scotians make their lives here.

2017-18 will be the first year for the new Atlantic Immigration Pilot. Launched in March 2017, the Pilot is part of the Federal Government's Atlantic Growth Strategy. We are excited to have another useful immigration tool for addressing our labour market challenges and bringing immigrants to the province. This regional initiative is expected to bring 2,000 additional immigrants to Atlantic Canada in 2017, about 800 of these will come to Nova Scotia.

In 2017-18, the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration is stepping up its outreach and engagement with employers. This is part of our role with the Atlantic Immigration Pilot but is also important for bringing immigrants here through all available immigration pathways. We hear from employers that immigration is complicated and time consuming and some employers are not aware of immigration as a tool for addressing labour needs. We will assist employers to navigate the immigration system and maximize the opportunities available with immigration.

Not only is it important that we bring more immigrants to the province, it is also important that we provide the settlement and community support to allow them to stay and integrate into life in Nova Scotia. We have a strong network of settlement services throughout the province to support the integration of newcomers through language, employment bridging, workplace culture, employer engagement, family crisis, computer and technical training programs. In 2017-18 NSOI will continue to support these programs.

On behalf of all the staff at NSOI, we look forward to working with you in 2017-18 to build a diverse and welcoming province and support economic development.

Original Signed By

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Lena Metlege Diab
Minister

Mandate, Vision and Mission

Vision:

Our vision is a welcoming province that sees greater numbers of immigrants each year and recognizes the important contributions they make to Nova Scotia.

Mission:

To attract, integrate and retain immigrants to the province by taking a lead role in engaging and working with partners to ensure Nova Scotia is well-positioned for growth.

Mandate:

In order to achieve the vision and mission, the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI) will work to:

- Market the Province as an attractive immigration destination and promote all immigration pathways to Nova Scotia;
- Select immigrants through the Nova Scotia Nominee Program who fulfil a labour market need and who will make a contribution to Nova Scotia's economy;
- Strengthen immigration and settlement planning, policy and programming in the Province in order to encourage integration and retention; and
- Promote welcoming communities, including raising awareness and understanding of immigration and diversity issues.

Core Functions

- Attraction and recruitment of immigrants to Nova Scotia
- Support the integration and retention of immigrants and their families in Nova Scotia
- Lead and advocate for immigration policy, leverage partners to advance provincial immigration priorities.

2017-18 Initiatives and Programs

In 2017-18, the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration will undertake a number of initiatives to support the core functions of the Office: Attraction and Recruitment; Retention and Integration; and Policy and Advocacy.

Attraction and Recruitment

Atlantic Immigration Pilot

The Atlantic Immigration Pilot is a three-year federal program separate to the Nominee Program. The pilot will admit 2,000 foreign nationals plus family members to Atlantic Canada in 2017, numbers may increase in 2018 and 2019 depending on performance. In 2017, Nova Scotia will receive up to 800 of the 2,000 coming to Atlantic Canada.

The Program is employer-driven and provides flexibility for employers to focus on labour needs and skill gaps. Provinces are responsible for designation and endorsement of employers. The pilot incorporates a broader role for employers regarding settlement and integration of foreign nationals. To participate in the pilot employers must demonstrate how they will support the integration of the foreign national and family members.

In 2017-18, NSOI will focus on communicating with as many employers as possible to inform them about the pilot, as well as to work with employers to find the best immigration program to meet their labour needs.

Employer Engagement

Engaging with employers and other immigration stakeholders is an important piece of attraction and recruitment for all immigration programs at NSOI. In 2017-18, NSOI has allocated more staff resources for outreach to businesses, post-secondary institutions, and other partners to inform them of the pathways available for immigrating to the province. Immigration is an important tool for addressing labour needs and growing the economy in Nova Scotia. However, because immigration can be complicated and time consuming, some employers are not taking advantage of the immigration pathways available to them.

Outreach to employers is a key part of ensuring the province meets the NSNP allocation. The Office's increased capacity for employer engagement will include developing a marketing approach to reach employers who are not currently using immigration to address labour and skill gaps because they do not know about the immigration pathways available, do not have the resources to navigate the immigration system or do not have experience with and knowledge about immigration.

Nova Scotia Demand: Express Entry

In May 2017, the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration will re-open Nova Scotia Demand: Express Entry (NSDEE). This stream targets highly skilled individuals who have a good chance of quickly finding a job in Nova Scotia's labour market.

Nova Scotia Demand: Express Entry was paused to new applications in 2015 due to a large inventory of existing applications. A review of NSDEE was undertaken by the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration. In May, this stream will re-open with revised criteria to streamline processing and control volume. Applications will only be accepted online.

International Attraction

In 2017-18, NSOI, working in partnership with the other Atlantic provinces, will conduct research to evaluate current attraction and recruitment activities and to identify new international markets. NSOI will also proactively work to develop a marketing approach to enhance our international recruitment efforts. We will continue to partner with other provincial departments, other provinces, the federal government and with employers to support their efforts to fill proven labour gaps.

This year, NSOI will also be working with the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie to develop and implement a joint francophone immigration action plan aimed at increasing the number of francophone immigrants to the province.

Streamlining NSNP Applications

In 2016, NSOI successfully launched its online applications system for two of its programs, Skilled Worker and Nova Scotia Experience: Express Entry. This innovation has made the receipt and processing of applications more streamlined and has allowed for faster processing. In follow up to this success, NSOI will move solely to online applications for these streams during the first half of 2017.

Integration and Retention

Settlement

Access to settlement services and programming is key to supporting the retention of immigrants in the province. NSOI partners with Settlement Service Provider Organizations (SPO, such as ISANS and the YMCA, to support delivery of settlement and integration programming across the province for newcomers to Nova Scotia. This programming includes language training, employment bridging and readiness programs, employer liaison, and welcoming communities programs.

Continued Support for Refugees

Last year, Nova Scotia was a full participant in Canada's efforts to help the millions of displaced Syrians. Between December 2015 and December 2016 inclusive, 1,545 refugees arrived in Nova Scotia. This is a significant increase from our average of 200 refugees in previous years. NSOI will continue to work with community and settlement partners as well as other government departments to support the settlement and integration of refugees in Nova Scotia.

Leadership and Policy Development

Canada Nova Scotia Immigration Agreement

In 2017-18, NSOI will work with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to review the Agreement for Canada Nova Scotia Cooperation on Immigration in preparation for renegotiation of the Agreement and its supporting Annexes (Provincial Nominee Program Annex and Temporary Foreign Worker Program Annex).

Research

NSOI will continue to participate in the Nova Scotia Roundtable for Immigration Research. Roundtable membership includes representatives from universities across the province, IRCC, and the provincial government. Spearheaded by Dalhousie and Saint Mary's Universities, its mandate incudes sharing existing research related to immigration and identifying both future research needs, and potential partnerships needed to fulfill those needs.

Performance Measurement

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2017	Trends - Subsequent year data	Strategic Actions
Immigration activities address Nova Scotia's economic needs and labour market gaps	Number of new immigrant landings per calendar year.	2003: 1,474	4,000[1]	2004: 1,771 2005: 1,929 2006: 2,586 2007: 2,523 2008: 2,651 2009: 2,388 2010: 2,395 2011: 2,140 2012: 2,336 2013: 2,529 2014: 2,668 2015: 3,403 2016: 5,483[2]	Implement the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program, a new immigration pathway for employers wishing to hire international candidates for high and medium skilled positions. Maximize all provincial and federal pathways to immigration by engaging with business, industry and labour to meet skill shortages. Targeted international and secondary migration attraction and recruitment initiatives.

[1] Target for 2017 is lower than the number of immigrant landings for 2016. The 2016 figure was high due to the number of Syrian refugees who came to NS that year. An influx of immigrants to NS at this scale is not expected for 2017.

[2] Preliminary figures for 2016, awaiting official figures from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

Breakdown of Landings – Nominee Program Principal Applicants and Dependents vs Exclusively Federal Pathways											
Category / Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016[3]
PNP total	863	900	866	797	629	777	955	1,202	1,400	1,394	2,590
PNP % of landings	*33%*	*36%*	*33%*	*33%*	*26%*	*36%*	*41%*	*48%*	*52%*	*41%*	*47%*
All federal	1,723	1,623	1,785	1,591	1,766	1,363	1,381	1,327	1,268	2,009	2,893
Federal % of landings	*67%*	*64%*	*67%*	*67%*	*74%*	*64%*	*59%*	*52%*	*48%*	*59%*	*53%*
GRAND TOTAL	2,586	2,523	2,651	2,388	2,395	2,140	2,336	2,529	2,668	3,403	5,483

[3] Preliminary figures for 2016, awaiting official figures from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

Integration and Retention

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2017	Trends - Sub year data	Strategic Actions
Nova Scotia's immigration policies and settlement activities support immigrants and their families to successfully settle and integrate in their new community.	Percentage of all tax-filing immigrants arriving in Nova Scotia in a six year-period remaining in the sixth year. This measure was originally created using a baseline of 37% from the 2001 national census. The figure rose to 63% by the 2006 census. However, the discontinuation of the long-form census in 2011 means it is not possible to track retention with census data. Similar calculations can be done using tax filer data available in the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB). The reinstatement of the long form census in 2016 may provide an additional source of data for future years.	2008 IMDB: 69%	70% or better retention rate.	2014[4] - 73%	Focus on attracting immigrants with job offers or with skills to acquire a job in a reasonable amount of time or match immigrant skills to labour market needs. Fund an integrated approach to settlement services to maximize settlement programming and resources to ensure successful settlement of immigrants, including to the Francophone community. Enhance welcoming communities initiatives.

[4] There is a two-year time lag in the availability of data from the IMDB, so the latest available data is for the 2014 tax year.

Leadership and Advocacy

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2017	Trends - Subsequent year data	Strategic Actions
Increase the number of annual provincial nominations and allocation for the Atlantic Immigration Pilot	Number of NSNP certificates issued annually per calendar year. Number of Endorsements through the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program per calendar year.	2003: 23 2017: # TBD	1,350 NSNP 792 Atlantic Immigration Pilot	2004: 117 2005: 303 2006: 400 2007: 405 2008: 309 2009: 367 2010: 500 2011: 525 2012: 725 2013: 630 2014: 717 2015: 1,355 2016: 1,375	Develop a shared understanding of immigration with stakeholders and influencers to advocate for a greater number of nominee certificates for Nova Scotia. Leverage our partnerships with key stakeholders such as Premier's Advisory Council on Immigration in order to achieve our common immigration goals for Nova Scotia.

Departmental Financial Summary

Departmental Expenses Summary
($ thousands)

Programs and Services	2016-2017 Estimate	2016-2017 Forecast	2017-2018 Estimate
	$8,432	$8,102	$9,120
Total - Departmental Expenses	$8,432	$8,102	$9,120
Ordinary Recoveries	---	($206)	—
Funded Staff (# of FTEs) Department Funded Staff	33	32.2	35

Note:
For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1